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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to make educators, authors, and publishers aware that they must be concerned with rhetorical form as well as content if they wish to present students with accessible, useful textbooks. Using a case study of textbook perception and use in a school district's sixth grade social studies classrooms, the paper illustrates the relationships between rhetorical form, textbook use, and selection. Rhetorical form is discussed on four levels: the knowledge level; the metadiscourse level; the text level; and the disciplinary level. A criterion checklist is provided to help teachers systematize their subjective judgments about the quality of textbooks, and a range of variables to which educators, authors, and publishers need to be sensitive. Finally, the paper suggests practical activities and concrete procedures which teachers can use to influence the selection process. Five tables of data are included, and 38 references are attached. (MS)

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RHETORICAL FORM, SELECTION, AND USE OF TEXTBOOKS

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February 1989

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Abstract

The degree to which textbooks are actually used by students and teachers is influenced by the rhetorical *form* of textbooks--the *way* the content is presented. The purpose of this paper is to make educators, authors, and publishers aware that they must be concerned with rhetorical form as well as content if they wish to present students with accessible, useful textbooks. A case study of textbook perception and use in a sixth grade social studies classroom illustrates the relationships between rhetorical form, textbook use, and selection. Rhetorical form is discussed on four levels: the knowledge level; the metadiscourse level; the text level; and the disciplinary level. A criterion checklist is provided to help teachers systematize their subjective judgments about the quality of textbooks, and a range of variables for which educators, authors, and publishers need sensitivity is discussed. Finally, practical activities and concrete procedures which teachers can use to influence the selection process are suggested.

RHETORICAL FORM, SELECTION, AND USE OF TEXTBOOKS

Selecting or using a textbook has always been a complex social process--a book, an institution, and a number of human beings in school settings--all interlaced and impossible to separate. Now, adding to this complexity, an increasing number of critics are questioning the quality of textbooks, stating that many books used in classrooms are superficial in content, lacking in academic rigor, and written so that they are easy to read but devoid of literary merit. Critics point out, too, that those who design and select textbooks are too often ill-prepared for the task, given too little time to do it, and, as Carlson (1988), Heath (1988), and Apple (1988) indicate, subject to political pressures that may conflict with educational goals. Committees of experts from various fields, formed to identify ways to improve the quality of textbooks, have suggested better training of textbook reviewers, more involvement of teachers in selecting books, and better communication between educators, researchers, and publishers (Fiske, 1984).

The purpose of this paper is to make teachers, curriculum workers, authors, and publishers more aware that they must be concerned with rhetorical form as well as content if they wish to present students with accessible, useful textbooks. The degree to which textbooks are actually used by students and teachers is influenced by the rhetorical *form* of textbooks, the *way* the content is presented. Because important factors such as society, schooling, and individual differences among students play an active role in the evolution of the rhetorical form and content of textbooks, sound decisions about changes in the design, selection, and use of textbooks require careful analysis and thoughtful evaluation. To illustrate the relationships of rhetorical form to textbook use and selection criteria several case studies will be used.

Problems in Textbook Use and Perceptions of Ideal Texts

We will better understand why rhetorical form is so important a consideration for educators when we understand the degree and types of variability in textbook use and in the criteria perceived to be needed for quality textbooks. To study how social studies textbooks were used and perceived in sixth grade classrooms, a case study was carried out in four schools located in a midwestern city (Crismore, 1981). Data from classroom observations, questionnaires, interviews, and documents were analyzed to determine how four teachers and 100 students used their textbooks and how the teachers, students, parents, and administrators perceived textbooks.

Textbooks in Use

Three broad methods of textbook use were determined: silent reading, oral reading, and looking. The silent and oral reading categories were further subdivided into reviewing old information and acquiring new information. Four reading sub-categories were thus identified: oral-old information, oral-new information, silent-old information, and silent-new information. The components of the looking category included illustrations, photographs, charts, and maps. The sixth grade teachers studied seemed to use their textbooks for oral reading as often as for silent reading. They most often used oral reading for material previously taught or read silently, and silent reading for material not previously taught or read about. It appeared that textbooks were used somewhat more often for new information than for old information.

The number of pages assigned or covered in a textbook (at one time) ranged form 1 page to 16 pages and the amount of time given for a textbook reading task ranged from 5 minutes to 45 minutes. Surprisingly, the number of interruptions during silent reading in classrooms sometimes equalled the number of minutes given for the task. It was not unusual to find an interruption of some sort every minute or two.

The school administrators who were interviewed in the study explained why a traditional/standardized social studies textbook was selected to replace teaching materials that used an indirect/inquiry approach. One administrator said,

> A textbook helps you keep direction, and it can give explicit answers--kids need a place to find answers. The reasoning method works only for a few, and there isn't always time for discovery. Also our teachers didn't know how to use the inquiry materials. A few years ago, we used in-service for new materials, but because of financial reasons, now we must have it all in the manual.

Another administrator noted that the school system needed a basic text in all subject areas to serve as a core for a program. "With a basic textbook, all students are given a foundation and a commonality. A basic textbook has unit tests, so there are now common tests, for instance." He continued by stating,

> Until recently there wasn't so much pressure on teachers to use textbooks, but now there is because of secondary schools' insistence that all incoming students have the same shared knowledge of social studies and because of economic reasons. We need ways to encourage teacher freedom, but we also need a foundation for students and economy.

The learning coordinator for one of the middle schools pointed out that the textbook which was adopted presented an overview and thus met the curriculum guide objective for a social studies overview in grade 6, but that some teachers had wanted an "in-depth" textbook and therefore were disappointed with the textbook selected. A supplementary workbook was chosen by the selection committee to help ensure that teachers used the textbooks, since many had previously relied on lectures rather than a textbook for teaching social studies. The data revealed that parents also pressured school administrators to buy and teachers to use traditional social studies textbooks. For example, when parents responded to a questionnaire item asking "How often should your child's teacher rely on the social studies textbook in teaching social studies," 97% said that the teacher should rely on it often or very often.

Teacher interviews and questionnaire responses to an item asking about the role of the textbook indicated that teachers do not always agree with parents, administrators, students, or each other on the role of the textbook in sixth grade social studies classrooms. In contrast to parents who felt textbooks should play a more important role than they currently were playing, one teacher stated, "My students haven't used the text very much." One teacher believed students should read social studies textbooks for learning new information, while another believed they should only be used as a source for discussion. Another said,

> Textbooks should touch on many controversial, contemporary issues and problems--like the racial struggle and other topics considered sacred. The textbook we have now doesn't deal with these issues. Textbooks should bring hard subjects to the fore, like the abortion debate. A futures book is needed.

For teachers, the role of the textbook varied from "a guide in teaching the curriculum" to "a building block for discussion" to "an outline useful to cover all topics introduced in the text." One teacher commented that she would use the new textbook for her higher ability students but would supplement it for her lower ability students because "they need to hear about social issues," implying, ironically, that her social studies textbook did not discuss social issues.

Another questionnaire item asked, "Upon what does your textbook use depend? (What determines whether you use the textbook or not?)." In the interviews the teachers explained their textbook use depended on the assignments and on whether or not (a) they felt the assignment was important or not to their goals, (b) they had students reading below grade level, (c) they used a workbook ("The

workbook makes sure I get into the text. We can't do the workbook without using the text"), (d) the textbooks were purchased by the school or were on loan from the publishers ("Students can't put their names in or mark on the loaned books so I don't use them much.").

The data from the interviews, questionnaires, and field notes suggest that a potpourri of factors illustrated in Table 1 determine whether and how textbooks are used and that there was little awareness of the relationship of rhetorical form to textbook use.

[Insert Table 1 about here.]

In the school system chosen for the case study of sixth grade social studies textbooks, the curriculum committee designed a textbook needs analysis form to help the social studies textbook selection committee. Analysis of this form helped bring to light the assumptions of the curriculum committee concerning textbooks and their use: (a) the student textbook and teacher's manual are essential for the curriculum. (b) The textbook should be used instructionally to present concepts and principles, build skills, serve societal need or policy (equality for all groups), apply traditional thinking strategies, and give a "hands-on" approach to geography. In other words, the emphasis should be on cognitive learning.

This district's textbook needs analysis form brings up, by omission, issues concerning the affective domain, the interpersonal and textual functions of language, and disciplinary structures, since these areas were not represented on the form. The administrators' and learning coordinator's comments raise issues about inductive versus deductive textbooks, multiple textbooks versus a single standardized textbook, teacher inservice versus detailed teacher's manuals, and the use of textbooks/workbooks to control what teachers do in the classroom.

Criteria Perceptions

One of the questions addressed in the case study of social studies textbooks in sixth grade classrooms was whether students, parents, teachers, and administrators have similar criteria for an ideal social studies textbook. The same questionnaire item about criteria was given to students, parents, teachers, and administrators: Name five things that make an ideal, suitable social studies textbook for (you or your child/students/teacher). When a content analysis was performed on the criteria listed by each group (see Table 2 for the most frequently mentioned criteria) patterns emerged that formed the basis for several tentative conclusions: (a) Students and parents seemed more in agreement about criteria than students and teachers; (b) teachers and administrators seemed to agree closely.

[Insert Table 2 about here.]

Both students and parents listed criteria showing that for them, affective aspects of a textbook are as important as cognitive aspects, and that psychological, social, and rhetorical factors should be balanced with factual content and skills factors. They believed that interest (whether the textbook could excite or stimulate) was as important as content and clarity and that attractiveness and attention to values and feelings were very important qualities. Students and parents seemed to view the ideal textbook as a literary work of art--a text that is humanistic and that informs in a lively and friendly/interpersonal manner.

Teachers and administrators, however, in general seemed to see the textbook primarily as a non-literary piece of informative prose. They tended to perceive the ideal textbook to be well-organized/systematic, informational, appropriate in content to school objectives, and readable on or below grade level. They appear far less concerned about interestingness and style or feelings and attitudes. Rather, they seemed to have a more objective, scientific, and analytical approach to an ideal textbook. There were, of course, commonalities across all groups of respondents. For example, all wanted a readable textbook with accurate, up-to-date facts, and colorful maps and pictures.

The criteria of each group were no doubt based on its experiences with the textbook in a particular context (parents and children experience the textbook at home differently from children and teachers in classroom settings, and teachers and administrators no doubt experience the textbook differently in a selection committee meeting than at their private desk), its social and cultural expectations, and its knowledge of language, form and content. The findings from this study indicated that there are discrepancies between student/parent perceptions and between teacher/administrator perceptions concerning the criteria for an ideal social studies textbook.

Rhetorical Form as a Solution

Many variables contribute to criteria commonly employed for designing or selecting quality texts. These include subject matter characteristics (e.g., background information, details, interest), textual variables (e.g., coherence), typographical variables (e.g., type font and layout), graphic variables (e.g., tables, figures, maps), adjunct aids (e.g., inserted questions, classroom activities), or stylistic variables (e.g., author presence in a text: metadiscourse). Arguments could be made for emphasizing any number of these variables when designing or selecting texts. However, one text variable has been widely and unfortunately omitted when discussing these criteria: the stylistic variable, metadiscourse, which is an essential feature of rhetorical texts.

The case study of sixth grade social studies classrooms illustrates the problem of multiple perspectives--the many variations of text-in-use and perceptions of the ideal text--and it sets the stage for a discussion of rhetorical form as a partial solution.

We can discuss form on four levels: (a) the *knowledge* level--a level that focuses on the structure of knowledge--the structure of particular actions, events, objects, and sequences and the relationships among those particulars, (b) the *metadiscourse* level--a level that focuses on structures for interpersonal author-reader relationships: about directives for readers concerning the author's goals/purposes, main points, and attitudes, etc.; (c) the *text* level--a level that focuses on structures of the ideational content in the text; (d) the *discipline* level--a level that focuses on the structure of the discipline, including its arguments and methods of inquiry.

The Knowledge Level: Learning from Textbooks

According to cognitive psychologists (e.g., Anderson, 1977, 1984), when we consider knowledge, we must consider its relational nature. A person's knowledge is first organized into categories; next, relations are formed among categories; and then abstract structures are formed that organize masses of knowledge. These abstract knowledge structures, called schemata, provide an efficient, economical means of allowing us to handle complex information as a unit. Knowledge structures are whole--complex networks of relationships describing the typical characteristics of particular actions, events, objects, sequences or attitudes. However, when knowledge is communicated through language, it cannot be presented as a whole because language is linear. Thus, a complex knowledge structure, which has no beginning or end, must be expressed piece by piece linearly. Because readers often fail to take the linear descriptions of relationships and reconstruct the non-linear knowledge network (McConkie, 1983), they often do not understand what they read and then cannot learn from their textbooks.

What can be done to improve students' ability to construct relational knowledge networks from a linear textbook? McConkie (1983) identifies several strategies to improve the way knowledge is communicated in language: a strategy that authors can use and strategies that readers and their teachers can use. First, authors can help define the nature of what is being communicated by providing metadiscourse--an author's instructions to the reader about how to put the presented information together and how to determine an author's intentions and judgements. For example, an author can use explicit statements to comment on the text, as in "Three causes are . . ." or "The important thing to

remember is . . ." or, the author can comment on the discourse aim as in "I am arguing that. . . ." Second, readers can learn strategies such as reorganizing, categorizing, and elaborating to help them construct knowledge networks. For example, by restructuring information, as in making graphic organizers and outlining, students can clarify order and identify what they need to learn. In addition, teachers can use modeling to demonstrate appropriate strategies for learning about form and content from text. Together, authors, readers, and teachers can do a great deal to prevent or overcome cognitive breakdowns in reading and learning from textbooks.

The Metadiscourse Level: Interpersonal Aspects

According to Halliday (1978; 1985), people use language to fulfill three principal semantic roles or functions: the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual. That is, they seek (a) to express information about the world, the phenomena of the external world and of consciousness, (the ideational function), (b) to show how they are interacting with the readers or hearers expressing their personal commitments, attitudes, and interactions with others (the interpersonal function), and (c) to form their language into connected text (the textual function).

An author's presence in a text is a manifestation of the interpersonal function of language, as Halliday and Hasan (1976) point out

> The interpersonal component is concerned with the social, expressive, and conative functions of language, with expressing the speaker's angle: his attitudes and judgments, his encoding of the role relationships into the situation, and his motive in saying anything at all. We can summarize these by saying that the ideational component represents the speaker in his role as observer, while the interpersonal component represents the speaker in his role as intruder. (pp. 26-27)

A text's ideational component conveys information--propositional content which the author thinks the learner doesn't already have (Halliday, 1973; 1978). This informing function dominates adults' conception of the role of language. Adults, especially educators, often have difficulty believing that language has the other interpersonal and textual roles. Yet for children and young adults, the informative function is minor and late to emerge while the interpersonal/social function emerges early and is the most important language function (Halliday, 1978; 1985). Textbooks that overemphasize the ideational function of language may use language that is narrower, less complex, and less rich. Because of this, such textbooks may inhibit students' language learning and their reading comprehension and writing abilities.

Metadiscourse, reflecting an author's presence in a text, provides a footing or an alignment between author and reader and between author and subject matter (Goffman, 1981). It is "discourse about discourse--words, phrases, and clauses--even sentences--that refer . . . to the speech event that the discourse and its readers create"--language that "announces, directs, and guides" (Williams, 1981, p. 195) and that "calls attention to the act of discoursing itself . . ." (Dillon, 1981, p. 114). Williams states (1981) that as authors write they usually proceed on two levels of discourse. On one level (the primary discourse level) authors convey referential, topical/subject matter material; on the second (the metadiscourse level) they help readers organize, classify, interpret, evaluate, and react to that material (Vande Kopple, 1985). In the sentence "It is unfortunate, I think, that women were not allowed to join guilds in the Middle Ages," *It is unfortunate, I think* illustrates the metadiscourse level, the interpersonal function, and *women were not allowed to join guilds in the Middle Ages* illustrates the primary discourse level, the ideational function.

In order to design and select textbooks, both the primary and metadiscourse levels of discourse must be considered when analyzing and critiquing textbook form and style. The advantages of having metadiscourse in textbooks are that it permits authors to make announcements to the reader about 'coming attractions,' change the subject, assert something with or without certainty, point out an

important idea, note the existence of readers, and express an attitude toward an event. The disadvantages are that it can bury the primary message or cause readers to react negatively to the text if used too mechanically or obtrusively (Williams 1981). Most communication theorists and modern rhetoricians believe that when used appropriately, metadiscourse guides and directs readers by helping them understand the text and the author's perspective.

Rhetoric and Textbook Styles

Pedagogical communication has as its purpose the educative influencing of students; therefore, education, as a special form of communication, is a branch of rhetoric. In classical rhetoric, the particular influencing effect of discourse was narrowed to persuasion, but modern rhetoricians have broadened the effects to include expository, didactic modes of discourse which seek to produce rational acceptance of information and explanation. Cronkite (1979, p. 67) defines rhetoric as "the study of the effects of discursive correlates or belief, with belief understood to include both comprehension and acceptance."

An interdisciplinary convergence of sociology, pragmatics, anthropology and narratology has resulted in a new, expanded rhetoric. The new rhetoric considers oral and written language as human action, a manifestation of roles, intentions, goals, fears, hopes, and creative capacities. It defines the dialogue (or implied dialogue if the speech event is written discourse) rather than the monologue as the normative speech event, and views language as a collaborative, social phenomenon. This means that rhetoric today has a social, interpersonal, and procedural perspective in which both authors and readers are role-playing participants in the speech event.

Authors choose their roles and infer the roles of readers (Purves 1984); readers choose their roles and infer the roles of authors (Tierney & Raphael, 1981). The roles chosen and inferred determine whether or not authors will use metadiscourse in their textbooks. The choices and inferences that an author or reader make are a result of attitudes and beliefs that each has about the world and each other (Bruce, 1981). Of course, the roles that authors choose to play and the roles that readers perceive that authors play may or may not be the same. The perceived authorial and reader roles and perceived author-reader relationships, however, are important influences on learning from texts as Van Peer (1988) and Olson (1988) have also shown. Those who design and select textbooks can benefit from studying the factors that relate to students' understanding and acceptance of authors' beliefs and attitudes, the perceived relationships between student readers and authors, and the writing style chosen by authors.

Authors of textbooks, like other authors, belong to rhetorical communities, communities of authors and publishers with shared knowledge, beliefs, values, and interests that set the norm for the content and rhetorical form--the style of their work (Purves, 1986; see also Apple, 1988). Because the nature of rhetorical communities changes over the years, so do the norms. For instance, the content included and emphasized in today's textbooks (Carlson, 1988, Taxel, 1988, & Wald, 1988, present critiques of content bias) is different from that of the early part of the century (Woodward & Westbury, 1983). Of course, textbook styles, the various ways the authors choose to present the content, change also. Thus authors of textbooks must be concerned with style as well as content if they wish to write accessible textbooks. Currently the most common textbook style chosen by authors, sometimes referred to as "textbookese," is an objective, unelaborated, straightforward style emphasizing the ideational function of language with an anonymous, authoritative 'author' reporting a body of facts in one proposition after another. This authoritative style is discussed by Olson (in press) and by Luke, de Castell & Luke (1988).

But there are other possible textbook styles. For instance, Frances FitzGerald (1979), notes that at the turn of the century, history textbooks had single historian-authors, who typically wrote readable, memorable textbooks with stance and an effective style. They wrote this way, she explains, because they had something to say about history; therefore, their prose style was natural, personal, opinionated, vivid, lively, and interesting. Their textbooks had an atmosphere about them and left an impression on

students--qualities often lacking in today's textbooks but often found in social studies texts written by popular authors for adult general audiences. According to Fitzgerald, since 1930, authors of history textbooks have been writing "textbookese," the deadpan style with the author 'flattened out' by the use of the third person 'objective' point of view. She believes this is a style that many students find boring and difficult to comprehend and evaluate critically.

Rhetorical Textbooks

The question, then, is whether presently available textbooks have an appropriate style or rhetorical form, and, if they do not, whether this may be one reason for their frequent failure to have the educative effects on students that we would like them to have. Textbooks which have rhetorical form are referred to as rhetorical textbooks--textbooks that effectively communicate both the desired content information and the authors' ideas about it by means of metadiscourse and by means of the voice the author chooses for presenting the metadiscourse to the readers. They are texts that are accessible to readers and that facilitate understanding and learning. When a text is rhetorical, it has certain features found in effective communication, especially effective pedagogical communication. The metadiscourse features displayed in Table 3 indicate the criteria for selecting rhetorical texts.

[Insert Table 3 about here.]

A rhetorical text presents a complete communication plan of the text with elaborate pre and post summaries and briefer updates of content, as well as the author's intentions and evaluation of the content, so that readers can recognize the author's plan and use it for constructing meaning.

These communicative features are considered particularly critical for young students whose learning may be affected not only by their limitations but also by their lack of prior knowledge about the conventions for expository school writing in general, and discipline-specific writing in particular. Authors of rhetorical texts are aware that (a) readers who are unfamiliar with the subject matter or the conventions of a particular genre or discipline may need explicit guidance and extra information and (b) may need a text which requires fewer higher-order inferences or that establishes a close interpersonal relationship between writer and reader (Jarunud, 1986).

Pedagogical assumptions and metadiscourse. The rhetorical forms and styles that students see in their textbooks are also indicators of underlying pedagogical assumptions and aims. For example, it appears that American social studies' authors, publishers and educators currently assume that the typical social studies textbook should be a body of facts without exposition (Westbury, 1985), facts to be memorized by the reader--like the multiplication tables. The role of the textbook authors, then, is to report the facts, not to explain them or their significance for the reader and certainly not to explain their plan for reporting the facts or to persuade the reader of their point of view. The corresponding role of student readers is to receive the facts passively from the truth-giving authority who wrote the text, and to memorize them, not to understand the facts or the author's attitude towards them and not to use the facts to build a larger picture or to think critically about what the author said or did in the textbook.

Another implicit assumption prevalent in much social studies pedagogy is that the realistic view of knowledge and certainty is what counts, rather than inquiry, exploration, creativity, hypothesis formation, and tentativeness. Booth (1974) has pointed out the tendency of Western culture to value objectivism and to dismiss--as mere belief and therefore value--everything that is not verifiable fact. A rhetorical community which polarizes fact and value, ignoring probability--the ground between objectivity and faith or feelings--and which extols certainty and a rhetoric of conclusions, rewards the mastery of verifiable information. In such a rhetorical community, textbook authors would find no encouragement to write textbooks that promote critical inquiry, probable judgments, and stance.

Both of these assumptions would no doubt have an effect on the use of metadiscourse in textbooks. Authors may not use metadiscourse at all or may use only certain types. For instance, students may not see hedges such as *probably, may, seem* or *apparently* used in their textbooks. In that case, teachers (if they read the teachers' manual) are the 'insiders,' concerning main ideas and purpose, and so on, not the student readers, who then become dependent on teachers for this information (see Baker & Freebody, 1988). Or writers and publishers might assume that student readers should be semi-independent readers and that titles, text-embedded questions, and end of chapter or unit remarks are a kind of implicit metadiscourse to be used along with teacher metadiscourse. On the other hand, authors and educators may be more likely to use explicit metadiscourse in textbooks if they believe that students should be independent readers, or that teachers probably do not use, metadiscourse, or that students will not understand the implicit metadiscourse in textbooks.

Another reason textbook authors and publishers may decide not to use metadiscourse is the constraints of readability formulas. Readability formulas, based on word length, word familiarity, and sentence length and complexity, are commonly used as indices of text difficulty in the U.S. because educators assume that naturally written textbooks are too difficult for students. Although the formulas were originally intended to be applied to already written texts, they are now being used inappropriately by textbook writers as they write. The sentence length constraint often means deleting or avoiding metadiscourse since it usually increases sentence length. For marketing reasons, textbook authors and publishers decide to spend the number of words permitted them on the primary discourse, covering as many topics as possible.

When textbooks are analyzed, their form frequently reflects a wide variety of pedagogical assumptions and values (provided authors/publishers manage to produce the books they consciously or unconsciously intended to produce). Table 4 illustrates some of these pedagogical assumptions and values suggested by textbook analyses (Crismore, 1984; 1985).

[Insert Table 4 about here.]

Text and Disciplinary Levels: Ideational, Textual, and Disciplinary Considerations

A group of researchers have recently suggested different sets of criteria for improving the quality of textbooks based on their attempts to identify characteristics of content area textbooks that influence how well the content is learned and remembered. Their criteria focus on the ideational and textual functions of language and on text and disciplinary structures.

The design criteria forwarded by Armbruster and Anderson (1981; 1984) is a rare example of meaningful translation of theory and research into practice. Their major premise was that ideas in informative texts must be coherent if students are to learn and remember the information and that the structure of the text is of great importance in achieving textual coherence. Therefore, they believe that authors should structure their textbooks in accordance with paradigmatic patterns of thinking found in the discipline (e.g., cause and effect or goal, action, outcome, generic frames for history) as well as with the conventions of coherent, cohesive written discourse in general. In other words, their goal was both global and local coherence. Another premise was that the more consistent and apparent the organization of ideas in a text, the more likely it is that the ideas will be learned, thus an ideal textbook would have explicit, consistent, repeated patterns and structures, both global and local. Their design criteria is incorporated into Table 5 along with those of Westbury.

[Insert Table 5 about here.]

Westbury (1985) attempted to sketch the beginning of a set of criteria for a "text-rhetoric" that originates in the ideational functioning of language and in a sense of subject matter and disciplinary structures. Westbury's concern was how to turn history into school texts--into teachable texts that provide a teacher with a resource base for classwork: exposition by the teacher, discussion, seatwork,

homework, and the like. He was also concerned with historical thinking, the kind of thinking which involves the when, where, who, how and why (the detail that is the characteristic medium of the historian's reasoning) and which involves the problems in historical explanations. Westbury believes that transparent teachable textbooks should appeal to the imagination of teachers and students through puzzle-posing, puzzle-solving, and meaningful work in the classroom. Classrooms, then, become workplaces for teacher and student historians who use textbooks as resources for learning the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and conventions for the discipline.

Conclusion: What Teachers Can Do

Although, as this chapter and others in this volume have repeatedly pointed out, school texts are problematic for a host of reasons concerning content and form, we can, I believe, improve their quality. By utilizing the criteria given in this chapter those of us involved in designing, selecting and using school texts can begin to re-examine our assumptions about language and knowledge, about learning and teaching, about reading and writing.

Teachers can begin to make a difference by analyzing and evaluating their current textbooks formally or informally, using the criteria suggested in this chapter. Teachers can use formal descriptive textbook analyses, for example, studies which investigate the extent of metadiscourse use in social studies textbooks (Crismore, 1984; Jarunud, 1986), or the considerateness of content area textbooks (Armbruster & Anderson, 1981) as models for their own textbook analysis. Informally, teachers can develop textbook journals in which they and their students analyze and evaluate textbooks based on the criteria we have discussed in this chapter. In this approach, for each reading assignment in a textbook, both teachers and students, as they read, make notes in the margins of the textbook or on paper using the criteria as guidelines. Using these margin notes as data, students and teachers collaborate in the production of a "textbook journal."

After analyzing and evaluating their textbooks, teachers are, of course, in a far better position to decide how to use their current textbooks more effectively. If, for instance, their current textbooks have little or no metadiscourse, teachers can supply the missing metadiscourse elements themselves in their lesson plans and presentations. The teacher, then, becomes the metadiscourser, rather than the text. To provide a more permanent form of metadiscourse and to promote independent learning, teachers and/or students can rewrite portions of the textbook inserting metadiscourse where it is needed (Collins & Crismore, 1987).

Teachers can supplement or supplant their current textbooks by providing alternative textbooks that provide what is missing in the regular textbook. By providing multiple textbooks, teachers expose students to a variety of textbook styles, formats, and approaches. If they are to develop an elaborate schema for what a textbook can be, students should see a range of school textbooks written for different purposes: informative, argumentative/persuasive, expressive and literary (Crismore & Hill, 1987b; Crismore, 1985; in press)

Another way teachers can make a difference is by direct involvement in the selection process itself. If teachers who have analyzed and evaluated their own textbooks are prepared to report their findings to other teachers and to administrators at all levels, they help to educate them about useful selection criteria, ways to do teacher textbook research, and the necessity for classroom teachers to assume ownership of textbooks. Teachers should pressure for participation on textbook selection committees, insist on helping to redesign their schools' textbook needs analysis forms, insist on being on state and/or national textbook adoption committees, and insist on being given the time and other resources needed to theoretically identify and practically apply selection criteria which have proven educationally relevant and useful.

Finally, teachers can become change agents in the design of textbooks. In addition to sending letters of advice to authors and publishers, informed by their textbook journals, teachers can write to publishers

indicating they would be willing to help with field testing new textbooks. They might field-test textbooks in progress by applying the criteria here proposed, perhaps doing an ethnographic study of the textbook in use in their own classroom or their colleagues' classrooms.

In summary, those interested in textbook design, selection, and use must think clearly and carefully about their theories of language, texts, and disciplines and then integrate these into a coherent model for the design, selection and use of good educational textbooks. In this chapter, we have tried to assist in this difficult process by providing a criterion checklist which can help teachers to systematize their subjective judgement about text quality. We have discussed the range of variables, which educators need to be sensitive to, from the interpersonal, textual and ideational dimensions of language to the rhetorical form of texts, and, finally, we have suggested practical activities and concrete procedures by means of which teachers can exert some influence on the selection process.

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Table 1

Some Factors Affecting Textbook Use

School/Classroom Context Factors

- Hands-on inservice with the text/familiarity
- Textbook availability
- Curriculum objectives and guides
- Social studies assignments, activities
- AV availability
- Holidays
- Tests
- School finances
- Interruptions during class
- School policies

Teacher/Student Factors

- Perceptions of the Text
- Attitudes/expectations for the teacher/student
- Belief system, philosophy about content, teaching, learning
- Prior knowledge of content, language, form
- Reading strategies
- Teaching strategies
- Future goals
- Curiosity
- Absenteeism
- Academic ability
- Personality traits/mental states
- Ethnic background
- Boredom/interest

Textbook/Materials Factors

- Text characteristics (teachable, readable, questions, etc.)
- Concept appropriateness
- Workbooks/worksheets
- Textbook subject matter
- Publisher assumptions

Table 2

Responses to the Questionnaire: Criteria for an Ideal Social Studies Textbook

Criteria Mentioned	Group Responses: Students	Parents	Administrators	Teacher A	Teacher B
Interesting/stimulating	x	x			
Values, feelings, attitudes	x	x			
Aesthetically pleasing (colorful layout, balance)		x			
New information, factual	x				
Readable, clearly written	x	x	x		
Understandable pictures, maps diagrams, etc.)	x	x		x	x
Up-to-date prose and visual displays	x	x			x
Accurate	x				x
Unbiased concern for different cultures		x			x
Summaries (before and after chapters)	x	x			
Definitions/glossaries	x	x			
Questions (embedded and end-of chapter)	x	x			
Answers to any questions asked				x	
Worthwhile learning activities	x	x			
Stated purposes		x			
Challenging,critical thinking				x	x
Well-organized		x	x	x	
Understandable concepts			x	x	x
Adequate examples		x			
Basic, not too many details		x			
Appropriate content for grade-level objectives			x		x
Scope and sequence			x		
Conflict, controversial topic oriented					x
Teacher's manual with clear instruction			x		
Materials for different reading abilities				x	
Sources cited for information discussed					x
Systematic--a course framework					x
Supplementary materials				x	
Good titles				x	
Appropriate amount of print on a page				x	

Table 3

Metadiscourse Criteria for Rhetorical Textbooks

1. An explicit statement of the discourse topic.
2. An explicit statement of a superordinate idea/thesis.
3. Justification statements that point out the significance of the superordinate idea (and other central ideas) for the students.
4. Explicit statements about the author's purpose(s).
5. Explicit statements about the author's discourse strategies and methods of development (e.g., I will trace the history of . . .; in this next session I describe . . .).
6. Explicit statements of topic shifts (We now turn to . . .).
7. Attribution of ideas (According to Mason, . . .).
8. Explicit statements giving the plan of the chapter/unit (The last part discusses and composes Y to Z).
9. Elaborate and briefer previews.
10. Elaborate and briefer reviews.
11. Evaluations of the truth conditions of a subject matter proposition (probably, certainly).
12. Evaluations of other types (Surprisingly, it is odd that).

Table 4

Reasons for the Lack of Metadiscourse in Textbooks: Publisher's Pedagogical Assumptions and Values

- Pedagogic theories are not sub-branches of rhetoric--the study of effective communication.
- The goal of textbooks is to inform rather than to inquire; subject matter should be reported, not interpreted and should be value-free and presented as a body of conclusions.
- The presentation of textbook information does not influence the way students think, read, and write.
- Students need an authoritative text with absolutes, flat assertions, and lists of "bare" facts, written by a flattened out, anonymous author or a committee of educationists.
- Students should only be taught to read primary level discourse; the interpersonal, social aspects of written language are unimportant; emotions, feelings, and attitudes are inappropriate in textbooks.
- Textbooks should not be concerned with teaching students about the domains of scholarship--where ideas come from, sources, citations, attributions, and references; the textbook should be the authority and source of all statements.
- Controversial topics and opportunities for critical reading should be avoided.
- Textbooks do not need macrostructure; a controlling idea or thesis is inappropriate for a chapter or section; therefore, the text structure should be non-hierarchical.
- Goal statements and objectives are appropriately included in a teacher's manual, but not in the student text.
- Mentioning the discourse topic is important, but pointing out the discourse plan and the strategies used to produce the discourse is not.
- Students' general and discipline-specific anxieties about reading and learning can be ignored.
- Textbook chapters can consist of a body only, with little or no introduction or conclusion.

Table 5

Criteria Synthesis and Checklist for Quality Textbooks

Criteria Categories/ Variables	Source of Criteria: Grade 6: Ideal Textbook	Crismore Rhetorical Textbook	Arm/And: Coherent Textbook	Westbury: Teachable Textbook	Current/ Proposed Textbook
1. Metadiscourse Level (Interpersonal Announcements)					
Topic and topic shift	x				
Superordinate idea/thesis	x				
Superordinate structure	x				
Discourse aim/purpose	x	x			
Relevancy for readers		x			
Discourse strategies		x			
Discourse organization		x			
Discourse justifications		x			
Attributions for idea sources	x	x			
Definitions	x	x			
Readers' existence		x			
Truth condition evaluations		x			
Content evaluations	x				
Author-reader relationships		x			
Reviews of main ideas, aims, etc.	x	x			
Previews of main ideas, structure	x	x	x		
Values, emotions, attitudes	x	x			
2. Text Level (Ideational/ Textual Aspects)					
Accurate, recent information	x				
Information pertinent to superordinate idea/ structure			x		
Systematic organization apparent to readers	x		x		
Understandable concepts	x		x	x	
Apropriate amount of major concepts	x				
Appropriate amount of detail	x		x	x	
Adequate amounts/types of examples	x				

Table 5 (Continued)

Criteria Categories/ Variables	Source of Criteria: Grade 6: Ideal Textbook	Crismore Rhetorical Textbook	Arm/And: Coherent Textbook	Westbury: Teachable Textbook	Current/ Proposed Textbook
2. Text Level (Ideational/ Textual Aspects) (cont'd)					
Introductions: background information, connections between prior and present learning, content/structure relationships, text structure patterns		x	x		
Titles/headings that signal text structure (frames)			x		
Connectives for idea/ text relationships		x	x		
Informative titles/ headings for discourse which follows	x		x		
Content--appropriate, consistent, repetitive frames/patterns/ structures			x		
Pronouns clearly referenced/close to word referenced			x		
Understandable substitutions for words, phrases, clauses			x		
Signaled figurative language			x		
Figurative language appropriate for readers knowledge/experience					
Word choice appropriate for readers	x		x		
Clearly written prose	x		x		
Well-designed, under-standable visual displays	x		x		
Visual displays that reinforce the text frame			x		

Table 5 (Continued)

Criteria Categories/ Variables	Source of Criteria: Grade 6: Ideal Textbook	Crismore Rhetorical Textbook	Arm/And: Coherent Textbook	Westbury: Teachable Textbook	Current/ Proposed Textbook
Unity--most words pertain to main idea/frame			x		
3. Discipline Level					
(Ideational Aspects)					
Authors/translators with interdisciplinary perspective				x	
Inquiring approach: conveys nature, pedagogy of discipline					
Presents discipline as process, engages readers in the process					
Integrates work of discipline and the classroom				x	
Resource for engaging discipline-valid activities, puzzles	x			x	
Primary materials				x	
Concrete objects: maps globe, charts, pictures	x				
Discipline-valid exercises that promote higher level thinking, reading, writing skills: analyzing, predicting, hypothesis generating/testing/ confirming, synthesis, evaluation	x			x	
Background knowledge/ issues fundamental to discipline arguments				x	
A framework that incorporates formal analysis of discipline argument structure and explication of arguments by details (discipline) expository processes)				x	

Table 5 (Continued)

Criteria Categories/ Variables	Source of Criteria: Grade 6: Ideal Textbook	Crismore Rhetorical Textbook	Arm/And: Coherent Textbook	Westbury: Teachable Textbook	Current/ Proposed Textbook
Adequate space to core generalization(s) and events	x			x	
Adequate explanations for each core generalization/event				x	
3. Discipline Level (cont'd)					
Generic frames, embedded frames specific to discipline			x		
4. Other Variables					
Aesthetically pleasing: colorful, balanced prose, visuals ratio	x				
Interesting, stimulating	x			x	
Challenging scope and sequence					
Questions, answers to questions	x		x		
Conflict, controversial topics	x	x			
Framework for the course	x			x	
Materials adapted to individual differences of students	x		x		
Information about other cultures	x				
Values, emotions, attitudes	x	x			
Supplementary materials for teacher (detailed manual), students	x				